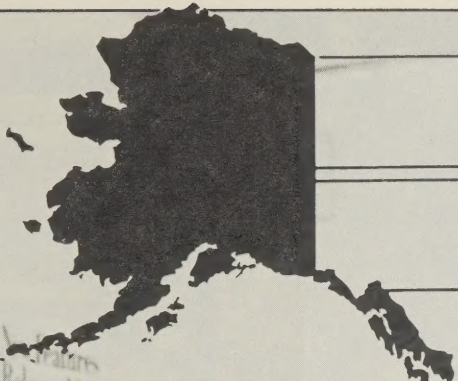


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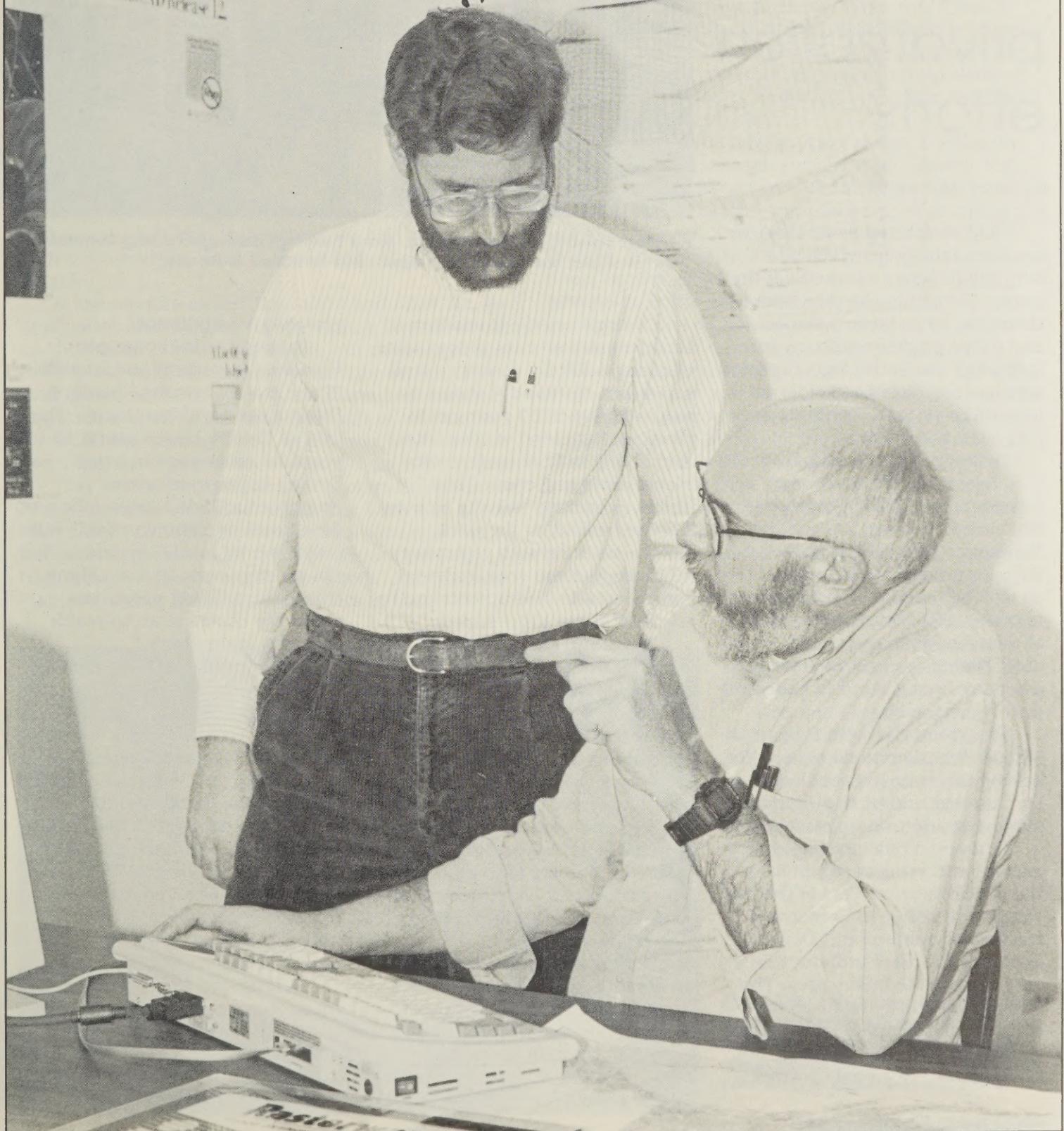
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ALASKA PEOPLE

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BLM land surveyor aids Romanian privatization efforts

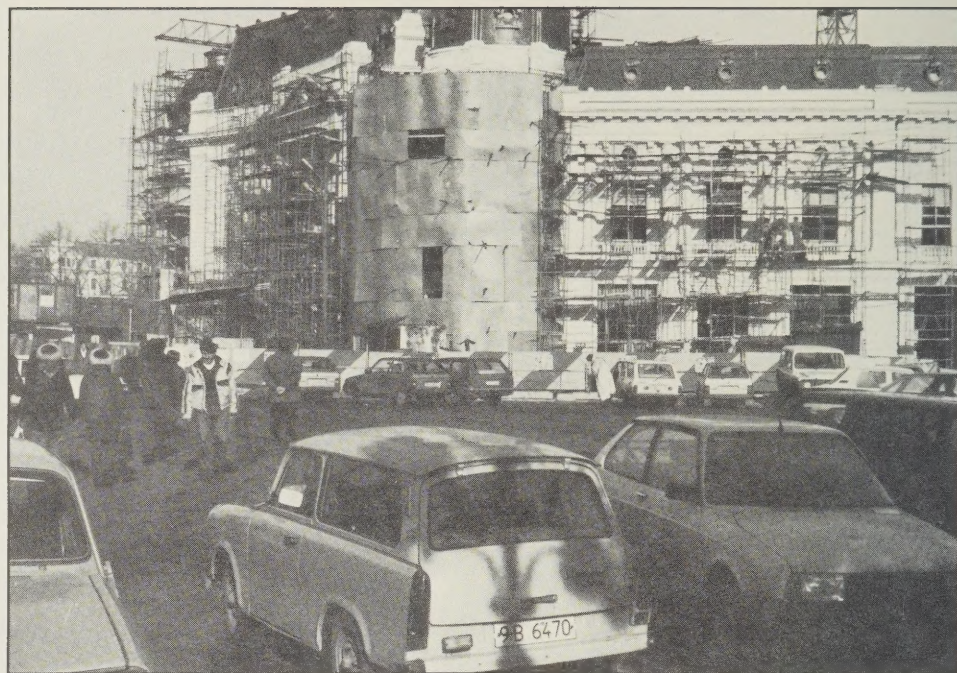
by Teresa McPherson

BLM professionals in Alaska are increasingly being asked to help the fledgling countries of the former Soviet bloc as they take their first steps toward democracy and a free market economy. In December Cadastral Survey review section chief Tom Deiling found himself en route to Romania on just such a mission.

Deiling joined officials from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) traveling to Bucharest, Romania, to aid the Romanian government in its land transfer process. Legislation passed by the Romanian Parliament in 1991 dictated the return of many lands to private ownership. Deiling was selected for his extensive background in cadastral survey contracting.

The group met with Romanian officials to recommend options for getting the most from the country's limited budget to support the surveying and transfer process.

Romanian officials want to expand surveying capabilities in the private sector. "One of the first things you notice in Romania is the lack of businesses," Deiling explains. "You see buildings, but very few private businesses. The few private surveying firms are severely undercapitalized, making it hard for them to take on a government surveying contract."



A typical street in Bucharest today. Many buildings damaged during Romania's 1989 revolution are still awaiting repairs due to limited revenues.

Tom Deiling

Deiling says the Romanian land transfer process poses major challenges for the country's land surveyors. "In spite of their low wages (about \$100 per month), there's a high level of education and ability in Romania's professional surveying community," observes Deiling. "What's lacking are the tools to do the work. They're working with yesterday's technology. Even vehicles to get surveyors and instruments out to the field are in short supply."

The USAID team assessed the needs of Romania's land surveyors, and came up with a recommended equipment list. The group also made recommendations for training and assistance for the surveyors. Deiling feels Romanian surveyors have the expertise to do the job, and that it's "neither necessary nor advisable to bring in extensive outside assistance from other countries. A limited number of outside advisors and trainers should be sufficient."

Deiling admits the task ahead of Romania's land surveyors is a staggering one. The breakup of former state-owned farms is resulting in small strip parcels with few delineating features. This could make modern photo-

grammetry impractical.

Deiling found the people of Romania very warm and friendly. "They love Americans," he says. "We got the royal treatment. They told us they've been waiting 45 years for Americans to help." Deiling hopes to return to Romania as USAID lends follow-up assistance in coming years. "But only for brief visits!" he adds. "It's not an easy place to live. Many things were falling apart, you could see effects of an unstable economy everywhere."

The commercial flight Deiling was scheduled to take on his return trip was canceled, so he and other USAID members were booked on Romania's official airline, *Tarom*. "When we stopped to refuel, the flight attendant opened the doors of the aircraft," said Deiling. "I wondered why, since it was very cold. Then we were told to unfasten our seatbelts in case we needed to deplane abruptly during refueling. It didn't exactly instill confidence!"

Deiling and his fellow travelers made it home safely, but now possess a newfound sense of empathy for Romanians and their struggle to catch up with Western democracy and free enterprise.

Volunteers revisit Nome after three decades

Editor's Note: Jean and Bob Murray worked in Kotzebue and Nome last year as volunteers with the BLM's Kobuk District. They spent the month of July in Kotzebue, and three weeks in October in Nome. The Murrays lived in Nome for three years in the 1960s. Now retired, they divide their time between Alaska and Arizona. In this article, Jean Murray describes their experiences as BLM volunteers.

KOTZEBUE—As Bureau of Land Management volunteers, we thought we might be living in a tent and counting ducks. But instead we had a barbecue with old friends in front of the BLM field office in Kotzebue.

A few months earlier Bob and I had filled out an application to volunteer for the Kobuk District of the BLM. Instead of counting ducks, our major task was to keep the field office open for an interim between staff changes. We answered telephone and personal inquiries and attended local meetings of interest to the BLM. Preliminary work on a flower brochure for use along the Squirrel River was also part of the plan.

This left us plenty of time to explore Kotzebue and renew contacts with old friends. The barbecue at the BLM office provided impromptu reunions with our former charges who had attended Beltz Boarding High School in Nome in the late 1960s. Now in their 40s, our former students are leaders in their

communities, with children and grandchildren. Yearbooks we had brought along provided lots of opportunity for remembering.

We had also packed hats, gloves, rain coats, long johns. Northwest Arctic sea coasts are chilly. The hat was needed one rainy day when the wind was blowing. What we really needed were dusters. It was sunny and warm as we joined the fabled Kotzebue July 4th celebration with a parade of colorful floats, games and the tug-of-war.

In October, we received another call as BLM volunteers—this time in Nome. What fun it was to renew contact with old acquaintances and to travel the roads out of Nome. One of our tasks was to put together a log, a milepost, of the road from Nome to Pilgrim River. I wish I had a log when Bob and I lived there from 1966 to 1969.

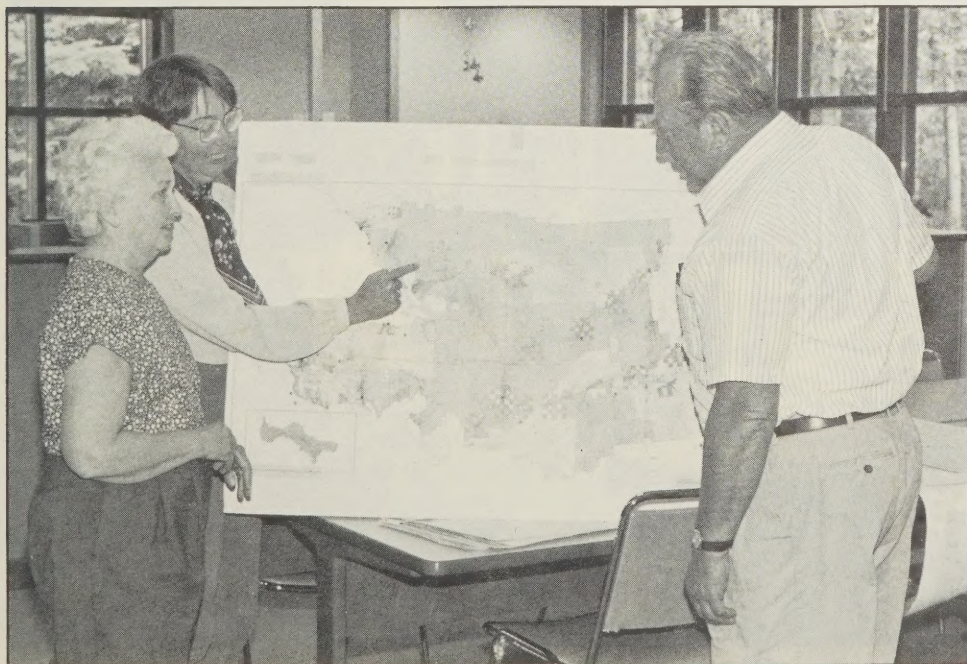
The road to the Pilgrim River is like a museum commemorating a much simpler time—nearly 100 years ago: old railroad trestles and bent rails, weather-beaten cabins, haphazard piles of tailings, not like the neat curved dredge ridges. And the ditches, those horizontal lines that pop out from the short tundra growth because willows have taken advantage of the extra water they contain.

Nome's placer gold deposits couldn't be mined without water. If a prospector located gold on a hillside his next move was to grab a shovel and dig a ditch to water or at least to catch what was available. The ditches we see today were shoveled by hand to supply water for hydraulic mining with the nozzle, "The Giant." After the advent of dredges, the ditches supplied water to thaw the ground. The mining company still holds the ditch rights-of-way but the ditches are no longer used.

Several of the ditch walker's cabins can be seen across the Nome River valley as they perch on the hillsides. I hope no one decides to reclaim the

hillsides. Nature has reclaimed the ditches and provided places for song birds to nest and moose to browse.

Bob and I really enjoyed working with the scientists and other professionals at BLM. It gave us a wonderful opportunity to get the whole picture of a natural resources complex. We think the BLM is super!



Kobuk District Manager Helen Hankins points out features in the district to Bob and Jean Murray. The Murrays spent seven weeks last year working as BLM volunteers in Kotzebue and Nome.

New database aids NPR-A

by Sharon Durgan Wilson

Don Meares, geographer and natural resource specialist for the Arctic District, is developing a computerized information management system that will consolidate all documents and maps related to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and store them in an easily retrievable form. Meares says the goal of the project is to produce tools for management and information for the public.

The evolution of the integrated information management system has become possible with improved computer technology and software programs that meet resource management needs. "Every time I try to explain this project to someone I suddenly realize there's another application for the system," Meares says. "The possibilities are endless."

Meares saw the serious need for an information management system while assigned to the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound in 1989.

"The historical knowledge—the first-hand knowledge gained by people directly involved with a situation—usually walks out the door when the person leaves the job," Meares said. "If we could capture that historical knowledge and retrieve it easily, we could use it in the future to model a given situation and predict consequences of actions."

Meares pulled together a mix of BLM, personal and donated equipment and software to make the

"There's an amazing amount of handwritten information. That information isn't likely to be used by others unless we have an index system that makes it easily accessible."

—Don Meares

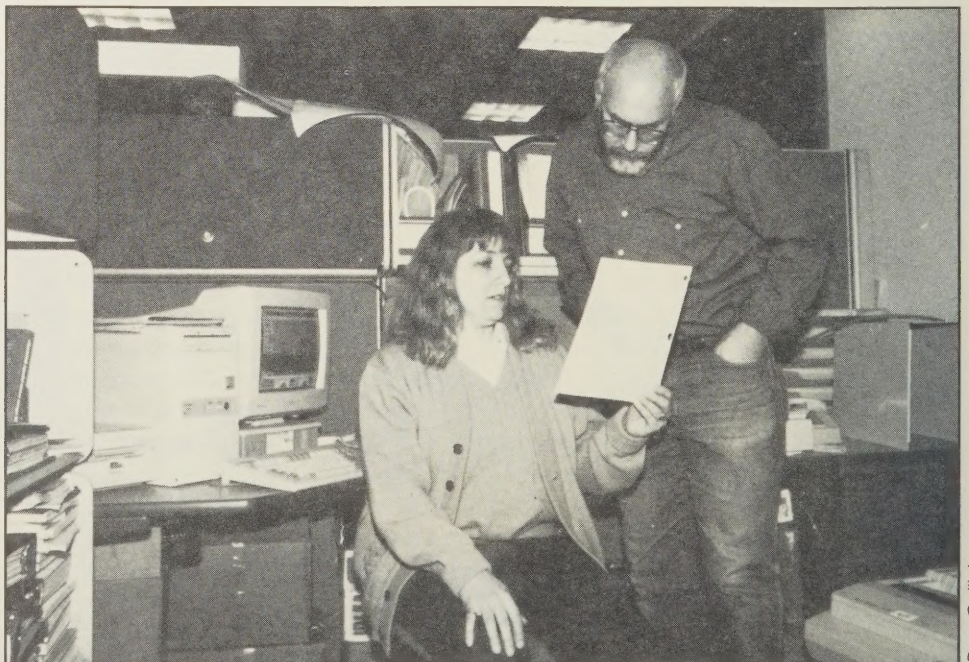
system work. He set up software programs to view drawing files, scanned maps and photographs. Documents and text are being stored on an optical disk.

From Anchorage, then Deputy State Director of Minerals John Santora suggested that one of the greatest documents concerning environment in the NPR-A was the 105C study. "This land use study was required by Congress under the National Petroleum Reserves Production Act," Meares said. "BLM spent \$24 million completing that study in 1979, and there are few copies in existence."

Information Resources Management Deputy State Director Ray Thomas and Chief of the Branch of Computer Operations Lowell King, both in the State Office, advised Meares on setting up the system.

"This wasn't an application in the sense of a computer program," Meares said. "It was tying many

Receptionist Lynette Roberts and natural resource specialist Don Meares discuss scanning techniques for developing the NPR-A information management system. Roberts and other Office Services staff helped put text and mapping information into the system.



Dan Gullickson

research

pieces of hardware and software together to make a whole system of scanning, conversion and access. We're computerizing the most-used documents and storing them digitally, so we can print them as needed."

Meares asked the Office Services Manager Jeanne Hart of the Fairbanks Office to let some of her staff help in digitizing hard-copy documents and maps. As time allowed, volunteer Melissa Harper, receptionist Lynette Roberts and accounting technician Dottie Pierce gained new skills in mapping and digitizing as they transferred information into the system. "It was a tedious assignment, and they've done an exceptional job," Meares said. "Without them, the project would be nowhere.

"The indexed 105C study will be a data base that can be updated and its information will be accessible to specialists and researchers," Meares said. "If BLM has to do an environmental study on NPR-A in the future, the baseline information will be in the 105C study. This is one way to extend the study's usefulness."

Meares will use a map as a method of indexing as he builds a massive data base of district information. "We can use a graphic picture to find the data, retrieve it, manipulate it and print it out. This will be very useful for taking maps out to field projects. The maps can zero in on a specific area and be enlarged so the specialist can use a scale convenient for the project," he said.

The unfunded information management project continues in fits and starts, as the Fairbanks Office Services staff has time. The entire text of the 105C study has been scanned and converted. The next step is to edit and develop a special process for tables. Another 127 maps will be left in a scanned format, and they can be accessed with the graphic viewing program, *Viewbase*, by Image Systems.

"Once into a project like this," Meares says, "possibilities keep evolving. There's an amazing amount of handwritten information. That information isn't likely to be used by others unless we have an index system that makes it easily accessible. So I thought—why not take the geographic data and link it all back to the document being scanned and indexed. So we'll be linking all the information together into this concept. But even I never understood how big this project could be, until I got started."

And the winner is...



Roberts admires Meares' "Most Integrated" award from Image Systems Corp.

Don Meares was named by Image Systems Corporation as "Most Integrated" among its 34,000 users worldwide at an international convention in West Palm Beach, Florida, Jan. 22. The Troy, NY-based Image Systems Corporation is a market leader in the development of imaging software.

Meares' project is only one-third of a much larger information system he's pursuing in the Arctic District. The field mapping project integrates Image Systems Cadoverlay ESP and GSX, Autocad drafting, Softdesk engineering and Facility Mapping Systems, Inc. (FMS) mapping software to produce field maps that will enable BLM specialists to analyze the natural processes that occur at abandoned exploration wells over time.

Meares was accompanied to the convention by Clay Cranor, of Denali Computing Services, Fairbanks, who provided invaluable assistance to Meares as he developed his project. "Clay made sure things worked as new components were installed and let me test new software," Meares said.

Secretary pursues thief

by Danielle Allen

Melanie Burg quickly lost her appetite when she saw a man leave the Anchorage District with her purse. It was just before Christmas when she and the rest of the Anchorage District were having pizza to celebrate the upcoming holidays.

Instead of being the hapless victim, Burg, the secretary for ADO Lands, jumped in her truck and took off after the guy. In the meantime, realty specialist Eric Schweska called the police with a description and license plate number of the man's automobile.

Burg followed the thief to a nearby post office on Lake Otis and waited outside. She also contemplated what she would do if he were to approach her or recognize her, but it never came to



Danielle Allen

ADO Lands receptionist Melanie Burg

that. Just as he left, she slipped into the post office and confided her dilemma to a postal employee, who let Burg call the police.

But the police were already on the case, having been tipped off by Schweska. The alleged thief was apprehended minutes later at a Mapco gasoline station near Lake Otis and 68th. Burg's purse and

Julie Aguilar's (secretary for ADO Resources) purse were some of the items found in the thief's truck. To Burg's surprise, the man was armed and wanted for other violations. The police commended Burg and Schweska for their combined efforts, but suggest not following a suspect. Burg says, "I'd do it again."

Kudos

Kobuk District fisheries biologist Joe Webb was honored by the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau as Meeting Planner of the Month for November 1993.

Webb arranged the annual meeting of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, attended by 150 people from around the state at the Westmark Hotel Nov. 15-18. Webb has been a member of the professional fisheries association since 1965 and is president of the Alaska chapter for 1994.

A plaque in recognition and appreciation of Webb's efforts to bring visitors to Fairbanks was presented by Celeste DeSoer, manager of convention sales and services for the FCVB, at the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce meeting Jan. 4.

You Are Invited

March 24, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. will be the next get-together for BLM retirees and friends at the training room at the Campbell Tract facility. If you haven't attended before, this meeting is for social purposes only, and there is no program other than visiting. Bring a dish to share and your own beverage, plate and silverware.

Out last meeting was Sept. 23, 1993. Several retirees phoned me that they wished to attend but didn't have transportation. Can we help them?

If you have any questions, please call me at 277-1361 or Jim Richardson at 274-4760.

Mark your calendars, and let's have a nice turnout for this spring get-together.

Hobart (Bart) Hyatt
BLM Cadastral retiree



Tips to live by

Sleep tight. When you sleep three hours less than usual, your ability to fight infections the next day can drop as much as 50 percent.

Work is heartening. One study found that 53 percent of heart attack patients who did not return to work experienced major depression, compared with 9 percent who resumed working within four months.

Have a nice day. It takes 43 muscles to frown, 15 to smile.

From *Vitality*, Dec. 1993

Awards!

List includes awards processed in December and January.

Quality Increase Award

Veronica Belton, Financial Services Supervisor, Alaska Fire Service
Jerry Cartwright, Computer Programming Analyst, Information Resources Management
Dennis Walworth, Supervisory Computer Specialist, Operations

Sustained Superior Performance

Joan Biggs, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management
Amy Bishop, Staff Assistant, Cadastral Survey
Ross Bordwell, Computer Systems Programmer, Information Resources Management
Jan Burris, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Arctic District
Charles Chase, Electronics Mechanic, Alaska Fire Service
Pam Chesla, Computer Equipment Analyst, Information Resources Management
Lyell Chittenden, Fire Logistics Officer, Alaska Fire Service
Michael Cincar, Cartographic Editor, Operations
Allen Deitz, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Lorri Denton, Realty Specialist, Anchorage District
John Douts, Supervisory Cartographic Technician, Cadastral Survey
Sandra Dunn, Supervisory Realty Specialist, Anchorage District
Greg Ely, Electronics Mechanic, Alaska Fire Service
Dawn Grant, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Maxcell Graves, Digital Electronics Mechanic, Information Resources Management
Susan Healey, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Carrie Hicks, Cartographic Editor, Operations
Mary Huntington, Misc. Documents Examiner, Operations
Arleen Ice, Budget Assistant, Alaska Fire Service
Gary Jamieson, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Merrie Johnson, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Michael Landau, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Robert Lloyd, Supervisory Realty Specialist, Anchorage District
Donald Lofton, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Beverly Lujan, Secretary, Alaska Fire Service

John Miller, Electronics Mechanic, Information Resources Management
Patricia Moore, Land Law Assistant, Conveyance Management
Terry O'Connell, Support Services Supervisor, Alaska Fire Service
Garth Olson, Supervisory Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Donald Pino, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Donald Rhodes, Electronics Mechanic, Alaska Fire Service
Paul Salvatore, Realty Specialist, Arctic District
Jeannett Sanders, Computer Specialist, Information Resources Management
Regina Scantlebury, Secretary, Information Resources Management
Troy Schmitt, Cartographic Technician, Operations
Georgia Taylor, Computer Assistant, Information Resources Management
Timothy Varner, Cartographic Technician, Operations
Frank White, Cartographic Technician, Operations
Bonita Willer, Supervisory Computer Systems Analyst, Information Resources Management
Donna Wixon, Docket Clerk, Alaska Fire Service

Special Act Award

Walter Blankenship, Warehouseman Leader, Administration
Melvin D'Anza, Materials Handler, Administration
Larry Peterson, Fuel Distribution Systems Worker, Administration
Jill Powers, Supply Technician, Alaska Fire Service
John Pulling, Aircraft Freight Loader, Administration
Flordeliza Raymundo, Supply Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Steven Sandy, Warehouse Worker, Administration
Carlton Thorpe, Aircraft Loader, Administration

On-the-Spot Award

Julie Aguila, Secretary, Anchorage District
Richard Bouts, Supervisory Landscape Architect, Steese/White Mountains District
Greg Chavez, Bindery Machine Operator, Administration
Jack Firestone, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Randy Goodwin, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Steese/White Mountains District
Paul Guyer, General Biologist, Cadastral Survey
Eloise Howard, Contact Representative,

Steese/White Mountains District
Alonzo Kelly, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Steese/White Mountains District
Laura Lagstrom, Secretary, Cadastral Survey
Glen Nelson, Bindery Machine Operator Supervisor, Administration
Jeff Pinkerton, Contact Representative, Cadastral Survey
David Righetti, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Paul Russell, Bindery Machine Operator, Administration

Time-Off Award

Sharon Dean, Contract Representative, Operations
Margaret Everingham, Contact Representative, Operations
Thursa Hayward, Contact Representative, Operations
Matthew Lee, Contact Representative, Operations
Alex Mitchell, Contact Representative, Operations

Length of Service Award

10-Year Service Award
Scott Dewitz, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Lindsey Lien, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Rhonda Reynolds, Cartographic Technician, Cadastral Survey
Virginia Spacer, Office Automation Assistant, Conveyance Management
Patricia Tengberg, Employee Development Specialist, Administration
Jonathon Thomas, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service

20-Year Service Award
Ronald Biggs, Supervisory Land Law Examiner, Operations
Evangeline Grafton, Land Law Assistant, Conveyance Management
Donna Lance, Deputy State Director, Administration
Karen Weerheim, Secretary, Office of State Director

30-Year Service Award
Lawrance Duffy, Materials Handler Leader, Alaska Fire Service

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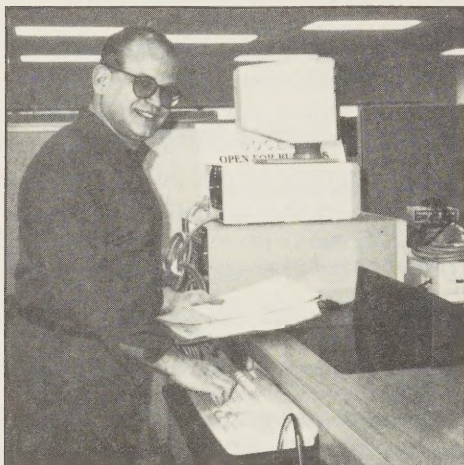


Docket speeds up casefile searches

by Jane Mangus

What a workload they've got! Every month the ASO docket section handles an average of 5,300 casefiles. Each staff member handles an average of 900 files a month, not counting telephone requests, filing and repairing damaged ones. So it's no wonder Diana Songer, chief of docket in the state office, thinks their new casefile tracking system is great. She thinks the people who order files will agree.

Docket recently acquired a new computer, new software for tracking casefiles, three new terminals, and new scanners.



Legal clerk Ramon Garcia-S scans a casefile. He says the new tracking system is "mucho better!"

"This new system will allow us to go statewide in tracking files," says Songer. "Suppose Shirley at the Campbell Tract wants to know where a certain file is located; now the computer can tell us exactly where it is. It will say, 'shelf 23,' or 'checked out to so-and-so in Fairbanks.' Under the old system, the computer could tell you the file was somewhere in Fairbanks or in the Anchorage District office, but then you'd have to get on the phone to find out who had it or where it was in that office." This, of course, translates to quicker service for people who order casefiles.

Another improvement is that the system generates instant reports. With the old system you'd have to shut down operations for several hours if you wanted a report. Now you can pull up a report on any borrower and see the number of casefiles that person has and their exact serial numbers.

So be careful! Now if people exceed their limit by keeping more than 25 files out at a time, docket's like Santa Claus. They know who's naughty and nice. Hoarders can expect to receive E-mail reminders to return some files.

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On the Cover:

Clay Cranor of Denali Computing Services in Fairbanks and Arctic District natural resource specialist Don Meares discuss the merits of integrating software into a new configuration. Cranor helped Meares set up a database to consolidate all documents and maps related to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. See story on pages 4-5.

Photo by Dan Gullickson



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